

From: Robert Bain
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 1:57am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement.

As a professional computer programmer, I've been monitoring the Microsoft Case with a great deal of interest. Like many people who've had MicroSoftWare inflicted upon me over the years, I'm hoping the power of Government can do what the marketplace has so spectacularly failed at: making Microsoft Play Nice with the other children.

But I don't think the currently suggested remedies are going to do that. I still think Judge Jackson had the right idea: Break MS into two companies, one for applications, one for OSs. (I'd add one for hardware, but that's just me.) If that truly is impossible, I think an equally good idea would be to force MS to reveal ALL their Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) to any porgrammer who wants to see them. They have a long and proud tradition of using hidden APIs to get better performance out of their own applications, while letting outsiders gimp along with the poorer-performing, better-documented 'official' APIs, which sounds like a fairly ringing abuse of monopoly power to me.

Good luck coming up with a solution. You'll be flogged if you get it wrong, and you'll get flogged if you get it right. But I've heard it hurts less when you get it right.

Good luck,

R. Bain.